

**REQUEST FOR A RULING THAT THE TRIVIAL NAMES
OF TWO WOODPECKERS, EACH CONSISTING OF A
SLIGHT VARIANT OF A PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED NAME
BASED UPON A WORD TRANSLITERATED INTO THE
LATIN ALPHABET FROM A LANGUAGE USING ANOTHER
ALPHABET, BE TREATED AS JUNIOR HOMONYMS OF
THE EARLIER NAMES SO PUBLISHED**

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(Commission's reference Z.N.(S.)678)

The purpose of the present application is to ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to give a ruling that the trivial names of two woodpeckers, each consisting of a slight variant of a previously published name based upon a word transliterated into the Latin alphabet from a language using another alphabet, are to be treated as junior homonyms of the earlier names so published. From the point of view of Japanese ornithologists the first of these cases is a matter of some urgency for the decennial revision of the *Handlist of the Japanese Birds* is now in preparation and it is particularly desired that the correct names for these birds should be used in it.

2. The birds concerned are now regarded as belonging to the genus *Picoides* Lacépède, 1799. The birds involved in the first case were originally described from material from the island of Sakhalin, the second from the Tianschan area. The names in question are the following :—

- (1) *Dryobates leucotos saghalinensis* Yamashina, 1931 (*Tori* 7 : 1) becomes congeneric with *Picoides tridactylus sakhalinensis* Butlerin, 1907 (*Orn. Monatsber.* 15 : 10) on the union of *Dendrocopos* Koch, 1816 with *Picoides* Lacépède, 1799.
- (2) *Dendrocopos* [sic] *major tianshanicus* Butlerin, 1910 (*Orn. Mitt., Moskau* 1910 (3) : 200) becomes congeneric with *Picoides tridactylus tianschanicus* Butlerin, 1907 (*Orn. Monatsber.* 15 : 9) on the union of the genus *Dendrocopos* Koch, 1816, with the genus *Picoides* Lacépède, 1799.

3. There is no authoritative approved spelling either for the word used to denote the Island of Sakhalin or Saghalien, or for the word used as the name of the Tianschan or Tianshan Mountains. Both these names are based upon place names used in languages using alphabets other than the Latin alphabet and in existing circumstances it is not possible to establish that a Latinised version of these place names spelt in one way is more correct than that spelt in another way. Slight variations in spelling due to differences in transliteration are not open to any serious objection in the case of trivial names, where the species concerned are referred to different genera. The question does however become one of consequence when two species or subspecies in the same genus bear names that are essentially identical with one another, differing, in form, only through slight difference in transliteration. In the present instance, it would clearly be most

confusing if in the same genus there were birds, whose valid names were respectively *saghalinensis* and *sakhalinensis* or *tianshanicus* and *tianschanicus*. Moreover, it would impose a quite unreasonable strain upon Article 34 of the *Règles* (as amended in Paris in 1948) to argue that the foregoing do not represent pairs of homonyms, merely because of the difficulty arising from the fact that we are concerned here not with true Latin words but with Latinised versions of words transcribed from other alphabets. I accordingly ask the International Commission to rule that, under Articles 19 and 34, read together, the words of which the foregoing pairs of names are composed are to be treated as homonyms of one another.

4. The request now actually submitted is that the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature should :—

- (1) rule that the following pairs of variant spellings are to be treated as homonyms of one another :—

(a) *saghalinensis* and *sakhalinensis* :

(b) *tianshanicus* and *tianschanicus* :

- (2) place the following trivial names on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Trivial Names in Zoology* ;—

(a) *saghalinensis* Yamashima, 1931 (as published in the combination *Dryobates leucotos saghalinensis*) (invalid as a junior secondary homonym consequent upon the reference to the genus *Picoides* Lacépède, 1799, both of *Dryobates leucotos saghalinensis* Yamashima, 1931, and of *Picoides tridactylus sakhalinensis* Butlerin, 1907) ;

(b) *tianshanicus* Butlerin, 1910 (as published in the combination *Dendrocopus* [sic] *major tianshanicus*) (invalid as a junior secondary homonym consequent upon the reference to the genus *Picoides* Lacépède, 1799, both of *Dendrocopus major tianshanicus* Butlerin, 1910, and of *Picoides tridactylus tianschanicus* Butlerin, 1907).

Note by the Secretary to the Commission : It will be convenient in connection with the application submitted by the Marquess Hachisuka to recall that Dr. Helen Muir-Wood has already submitted an application (Z.N.(S.)530) which, though primarily concerned with the relative status of the names *Jakowleffia* Puton, 1875, and *Yakovlevia* Fredericks, 1925 (1951, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 6 : 90-92), raises a general question of principle essentially identical with that raised in the present application by the Marquess Hachisuka. For the only difference is that Dr. Muir-Wood's application is concerned with scientific names based upon the names of persons, while that of the Marquess Hachisuka is concerned with scientific names based upon the names of places or geographical features. It will, no doubt, be to the general convenience if both these aspects of this general problem are dealt with simultaneously by the Commission rather than that they should be treated as constituting separate problems. (signed) Francis Hemming. 24th September 1952.